Research Involving Inmates

213.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish safeguards and guidelines to protect inmates from being used as research subjects in medical and other research experiments based only on their status as inmates and without proper approval, review, or informed consent.

213.2 POLICY

The Thurston County Sheriff's Office will conduct and support research that improves operations, enhances professional knowledge, decreases recidivism, and advances the office's mission in accordance with existing laws and with appropriate protection of all inmates. However, the use of inmates for medical, pharmaceutical, or cosmetic experiments is prohibited.

213.3 AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Prior to initiating any approved research, all persons conducting research in this facility must agree to abide by all office policies relating to the security and confidentiality of inmate files. Based upon the intended use of the research, guidelines will be established regarding what information shall be accessible to the researcher or the research organization.

Any requests for an exception shall include a response to the following questions as part of the proposed research project:

- Who is conducting the research?
- What is the purpose of the research?
- What is the methodology?
- Do the researchers or persons advocating research involving the use of inmates have an understanding of their ethical responsibilities, including considerations for the establishment of an Institutional Review Board (IRB), as described in 45 CFR 46.301 et seq.?
- Any other information as deemed appropriate by the Chief Deputy of Corrections or Sheriff.

Inquiries regarding proposed research projects from local, state, and federal executive and legislative bodies/agencies will be brought to the attention of the Sheriff immediately by the employee who receives the request. At the direction of the Sheriff, an appropriate and timely response will be made to each legitimate inquiry.

Research or studies involving more than the information identified as public information may require signed release/waiver forms from the involved inmates. The Sheriff should consult and seek guidance from the legal counsel serving the Office or other legal experts in these matters.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2023/01/17, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Thurston County Sheriff's Office

Inmates are not precluded from individual treatment based on the need for a specific medical procedure that is not generally available. An inmate's treatment with a new medical procedure by the inmate's own physician shall be undertaken only after the inmate has received a full explanation of the positive and negative features of the treatment, and only with the inmate's informed consent.

213.4 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Any research conducted or supported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services will be required to comply with the provisions of 45 CFR 46.301 et seq.

213.5 INMATES IN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

When inmates who are participants in a community-based research protocol are admitted to the facility, the following shall occur:

(a) The intake nurse shall collect all relevant data including the name and contact information of the treating physician, and all available detail about the treatment regimen and the condition being treated.

(b) The responsible physician shall be contacted prior to the initiation of treatment.

(c) Consultation with community researchers shall be made by the responsible physician to determine the intent of the study and any necessary parameters to measure as the treatment period progresses.

(d) Necessary information shall be obtained so that withdrawal from the research protocol is done without harming the health of the inmate.

213.6 HUMAN RESEARCH STUDIES

This office does not endorse enrolling inmates into human research studies. Requests to enroll inmates in human research studies will not ordinarily be approved. However, any request to enroll an inmate into such a study must be reviewed by the Sheriff, the Responsible Physician and legal counsel, and authorization provided prior to enrollment. Any authorized enrollments shall comply with all state and federal guidelines.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2023/01/17, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Thurston County Sheriff's Office